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2 September 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Intelligence

SUBJECT : National Intelligence Situation Report on Korea--
Comments by the Senior CIA Participant
[redacted] (OPR)

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Facts

The first interagency task force to produce a "national intelligence situation report" was set in motion on Thursday morning, 19 August by the Director of Central Intelligence. The task force, managed by [redacted] (Vice Director for Production, DIA) issued eight "sitreps"--at:

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0200 EDT	20 August	1200 EDT	24 August
1400 EDT	20 August	0900 EDT	25 August
2400 EDT	20 August	1000 EDT	26 August
0500 EDT	23 August	1200 EDT	27 August

Task force activity was suspended at noon, Friday, 27 August.

Task force members (and other interested parties) first assembled at the Pentagon's National Military Intelligence Center at about 1300 Thursday, 19 August. At 1500, DIA (as the DCI's "Executive Agent") chaired a free-wheeling organizational meeting of representatives from CIA, NSA, State/INR, and DIA--with observers from the IC Staff and from a number of DOD components. It was decided that the task force would commence a 24-hour operation without delay and, at Lt. General Wilson's instruction, prepare a "base-line" sitrep for distribution very early the following morning. At the meeting, which lasted a few hours, the INR representative announced that INR, short of qualified

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analysts, could not participate further in the exercise. Thereafter, INR had no role in the production or (to my knowledge) coordination of the sitreps. Nor did INR respond on the one occasion (on 27 August) when the task force made a specific request.

A major portion of the organizational session was devoted to varying degrees of assurance from high-level military officers--including General Wilson and Rear Admiral Robertson, DDI (NMIC)--that the task force would have a reasonably complete flow of information on Korea-related US military plans and operations. It was emphasized, however, that material on plans or "options" could not be placed in the sitreps.

Hour-to-hour management of the task force was in the hands of two alternating members of General [] staff. Routinely, action at the assigned NMIC office picked up about four or five hours prior to publication--reviewing the mail, phone calls to parent agencies, preparation of drafts. Generally, the DIA specialist on Korea collaborated with his NSA counterpart on the military input, while the CIA specialist prepared political and international portions of the sitrep. (All this in contrast to the earlier assumption by DIA's task force managers that members would act mainly as funnels for drafts provided by parent organizations.) A paragraph or so on US military actions ongoing in the Korean area was put together by the DIA manager after conference with operational elements. Task force drafts were not much changed by higher military authority; nor was the required coordination of text with parent agencies any problem.

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Comments

Quality. The Korea sitreps are "fair to good." Allowing for the newness of the interagency process, the product reflects credit on the DIA managers. There are (to my knowledge) no important mistakes of fact or significant omissions in the eight reports. There is one "assessment," in the third sitrep, that the task force would like to buy back.

Process. The strong points of the operation:

- 1 - While only four or five specialists were made available to the task force, they were able to carry 95 percent

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of the production burden over the week. Each proved knowledgeable on Korea and capable of writing well. Mutual trust and easy teamwork prevailed within 36 hours of beginning operations.

- 2 - Support from parent agencies (DIA, NSA, CIA) and their respective task forces--each agency (and State) had one, at least until Saturday the 21st--appeared to be excellent. The CIA task force on Korea responded well to my request for a written contribution to the initial sitrep, and to my frequent phone calls for information. On occasion, I visited the CIA Ops Center to review material not readily available at the Pentagon, especially maps and photos. OCI analysts and NID editors responded to my frequent calls on an individual basis after the CIA task force was disbanded.

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Now for the bad news:

- 1 - The military failed to provide the promised flow of background information on US plans and operations. If the DCI gave the sitrep action to DIA in order to complete this (often lacking) piece of the intelligence puzzle, it didn't work! Indeed, at the moment of maximum tension--at 1800 EDT, Friday the 20th--the DCI's personal effort to secure details of the tree-cutting operation exposed the J-3 area's clear unwillingness to cut the intelligence community into the action. Persistent effort by CIA's representative at J-3 did not change this situation through the week. It should be noted too that CIA and NSA task force members had no unescorted access to the hyperactive NMCC area through the entire week.

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- 2 - The operational information problem was compounded by the inability of the task force to secure the State Department task force's daily publication on Korean plans and activities (prepared perhaps in connection with WSAG discussions). The CIA task force received it. INR received it. The JCS received it. The task force managed to acquire one or two rather stale issuances.
- 3 - The flow of intelligence information for the task force was not managed well by DIA. Paper flow was sporadic; some pieces available to other agencies were totally absent or appeared late; non-coms in charge of the paper flow seemed generally unaware of task force needs, or even of its existence.
- 4 - The paper flow problem was part of a generally poor physical setup provided by DIA. Room and desk space were at a premium in the Pentagon basement area. Phones were inadequate at some points--e.g., only one gray line. Secretarial help and general clerical assistance were not always available. Some personnel handling Xerox and LDX work seemed indifferent to task force requests for speed.
- 5 - Maps, photos, and other graphics were sparse, totally inadequate to task force needs.
- 6 - Other "housekeeping" problems included the usual complaints of slow "badging" of task force personnel, our inability to enter the Pentagon at night without escort, lack of food and beverages over long night shifts, and parking problems. The same problems would probably be encountered at McLean.
- 7 - Finally, all task force members agree that there was no substantive need for sitreps after Monday morning, the 23rd; the task force should have been terminated at that time.

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Recommendations

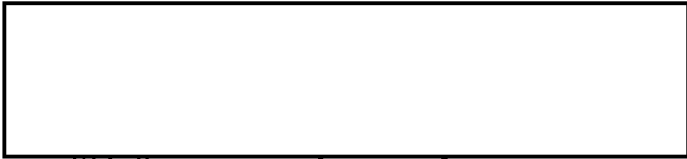
The national intelligence sitrep system adds another to the long list of task forces which emerge in crisis situations. At the Pentagon last week, there was a DIA task group, a Crisis Action Team, the usual NMCC mechanisms--and our own task force. The competition for military information was lost by the National Intelligence Situation Report Task Force. Intelligence, in my view, will always lose to operational support in the Pentagon. Perhaps the DCI should review the idea of casting DIA as "Executive Agent" for future sitreps.

JCS unwillingness to provide information to intelligence operators in time of crisis is an old story. I despair of "solutions."

The new sitrep system adds another element of competition to the usual interagency struggle for area specialist personnel in time of crisis. In this case, two of the three CIA bodies provided the task force were not up to the mark on Korean affairs.

"National" intelligence sitreps could reasonably be expected to reflect awareness of all important aspects of a developing situation; the name certainly conveys such an impression. The interagency task force, lacking information on planned US military moves and lacking information (from State) on evolving US political strategies (e.g., our posture at upcoming Panmunjom sessions, results of private Chinese contacts), could not properly sharpen its focus on North Korean actions and statements in preparing certain of the sitreps. For a truly "national" intelligence product, for a report that takes account of the "real world," the customary DOD and State barriers would have to be lowered, at least for task force participants.

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CIA Representative on the
National Intelligence Sitrep Task Force

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